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Unlike Sen. Smathers

Without A CIA Leak, One's Status

BY GEORGE DIXON

WASHINGTON — Judging from all the "inside information" and "confidential advices" being bellowed about Capitol Hill these days, the Senate has a new status symbol. To attain status, a senator must convey the impression that he has a personal counterspy planted in the Central Intelligence Agency. The bigger the CIA leak, the bigger the senator.

To be anybody under the new status symbol, a Senator must make it look as if he were privy to the CIA's innermost secrets, and is revealing them because "THE COUNTRY SHOULD KNOW." In the first paragraph of every press release he issues in bales he must imply the source of the leak without actually identifying it.

This calls for rather tricky wording, but the senatorial status-seeker shouldn't go too far astray if he sticks to such basic opening lines as "My confidential information is ----" "According to official data that has been made available to me ----" and "This has not been given out but I have inside information that ----".



Dixon

★ ★ ★
THESE LINES are available to all the senators, in the senatorial domain as you might say, but some of the lawmakers have preferences.

For example, Senator Frank Lausche of Ohio prefers a simple, "My information is ----" Senator Kenneth Keating of New York prefers a more complex, "My information, based upon official data, ----"

A number of the senators have geographical preferences, too. Senator Homer Capehart of Indiana, who is pretty busy this week deciding whether he should lead an invasion against Castro, likes it to appear that he has a big CIA leak on Cuba. So does Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona.

Senator Jacob Javits prefers to imply a big CIA leak on Berlin. Senator Thomas Dodd of Connecticut prefers Katanga. Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon prefers to let it be known that he knows everything.

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THE HOTTEST thing right now is to have a Cuban leak. Senator George Smathers of Florida seems to have a bigger and wider leak on this than anybody. By George - George might have a two-country leak! I wonder if Cuba has a CIA?

A Cuban leak is worth two Berlin leaks. You've gotta trade four Viet Nam marbles for a Cuban aggie. A sieveful of leaks in the Far Eastern League equals one Castro League box top.

A senator who doesn't claim a CIA leak just isn't alive to the new status symbol. One who passed up his image was Senator Spessard Holland of Florida.

Is Stagnant

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Nearly three weeks ago Senator Holland had all the inside information on the Soviet build-up inside Cuba revealed only last Tuesday by President Kennedy. Senator Holland had all the inside on the variety of missiles supplied by the Russians, the radar, electronic equipment, and number of Russian technicians, precisely as outlined a fortnight later by the President.

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I KNOW all this, because Senator Holland showed me. Know where he got his uncanny inside information?

From a mimeographed letter entitled "The Cuban Report" sent to many members of Congress by the Cuban Student Directorate, P.O. Box 805, Miami 1, Fla.

Senator Holland kept it to himself, however, because both Special Assistant to the President, McGeorge Bundy and Robert A. Hurwitch, chief of the Cuban Desk at the State Department, called him personally to beg him not to release any of it ahead of the President.

Senator Holland sat on it so hard he squashed his status symbol.

The competition for status through a CIA leak has gone beyond the Senate. Newspapermen have entered the contest too.

I have just completed a survey which indicates I may be the only newspaperman in Washington without a CIA leak. The only excuse I have to offer is this sad, deflating truth:

By the time I woke up in 1955, when I began to have a CIA leak they'd all been taken; there weren't any left.